

March 2010



Dear Mission Team Volunteer,

Hope Clinic International (HCI) wants to thank you for your interest in being part of a medical mission team, to provide health care for impoverished children in medical need. The following is information regarding our 2010 Mission trip to Nicaragua Central America.

Brief History of HCI

Dr. Dan Heffernan, a family physician, founded Hope Clinic International (HCI) in 1997. Dr. Heffernan was moved to establish HCI after personally observing the poverty, lack of medical resources and overwhelming need in Nicaragua, Central America. Dr. Heffernan is also the founder of Hope Medical Clinic in Ypsilanti, Michigan, established over 20 years ago, to serve the working poor in his local community.

Since its inception, HCI has sent volunteer medical and surgical teams to the towns of Estelí, Jinotega, Matagalpa, Leon, Masaya, Chinandega, and Managua Nicaragua, conducting walk-in pediatric clinics in partnership with the Nicaraguan Saint Vincent DePaul Society. HCI has renovated and equipped a pediatric operating room and donated laparoscopic equipment that is used by our surgical team and the local surgeons. Our volunteer surgeons work with local surgeons to teach them modern surgical techniques for children needing complex surgeries. The medical team cares for between 600 and 1,000 children during each two-week trip, and provides an examination and prescription medications. Each child also receives anti-parasitic medication and vitamins. We also maintain and support a permanent free clinic in the town of Esteli which is staffed by a local physician.

The purpose of our international mission program is to provide donated medical and surgical help to women and children in Nicaragua where medical and/or financial resources and skills are not available. We believe or faith is expressed through our work in providing high quality healthcare to children and women of underdeveloped countries. Our expression of faith is realized through the modeling, training, assisting, supporting and including of local physicians and surgeons and medical professionals serving the poor. We do this by staying true to our core values of respect, dignity, inclusion and continued alliance with the people and countries we serve.

Volunteering for HCI

Team members are selected on the basis of their qualifications, the needs of the team and their ability to represent Hope Clinic International. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age or be accompanied by a parent or adult given legal responsibility by the parent. Each participant becomes an ambassador not only for Hope Clinic International, but for all Americans. It is expected that all participants conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the mission of Hope Clinic International and that is sensitive to the cultural values of the Nicaragua people. Participants are expected to demonstrate responsible behavior that builds positive relationships, affirms the value of the individual and culture, contributes to respect for self and others, and brings hope to the poor.

Team Member Responsibilities

The Medical Team normally consists of a team leader, two to four physicians, translators, several nurses, medical students or other health care professional and pharmacy support staff. The team will normally see between 60-100 children in a day.

The **physicians** must be willing to attend pediatric patients for generally minor acute care problems. More serious problems are referred to the local hospital in the towns we are working. We also request that

physicians be willing to work with local physicians where we have the cooperation of a local provider of care.

The **translators** are assigned first to work with any non Spanish speaking doctors and then to the pharmacy to explain to the parents how to give the medications. The translators do not need to know medical Spanish but must understand and translate colloquial conversational Spanish.

Nurses, medical students and other health care professionals that do not speak Spanish will either help with organizing the clinic at taking height and weights, blood pressure and temps, or in the pharmacy filling prescriptions. **Non medical professionals** normally assist in the pharmacy or in the waiting room area working with the children while they wait or helping in whatever way directed by the team leader.

The Surgical Team normally consists of a team leader, one to two surgeons, an anesthesiologist or nurse anesthetist, OR nurse, post op recovery/peds nurse, circulation nurse and 1-2 translators, 1-2 support staff or students. We work with the Nicaraguan surgeons and staff. Usually one or two Nicaraguan nurses assist us in the OR and keep records. The pediatric general surgeon in charge will evaluate patients for surgery on the first day of the week and then schedule the surgeries for the week. All surgeries are considered teaching opportunities and some of the more complex cases can be very long.

Mission Team Costs

Total cost of the medical team trip per volunteer for June, 2010 is expected to be:

\$800 (for 2 weeks – This does not include airfare).

- **Airfare typically runs about \$500 to \$700.**

½ the Payment is expected at the time of purchasing airline tickets (if airfare is included) and the remainder of the cost by one month prior.

If purchasing your own airfare, the \$800 is due one month prior to departure.

The above cost represents the following expenses

1. Round trip airfare expenses to Managua, Nicaragua.

Hope Clinic International will be responsible for making these travel arrangements (unless you would prefer to make your own arrangements), with every attempt to locate the lowest possible rates available. HCI is able to get group rates with the airlines only for 10 or more travelers from the same city, so if you will be flying out of Detroit please check with HCI before making your own travel arrangements. If HCI purchases your ticket and you cancel your trip after tickets are purchased you will be responsible for the full cost of this ticket.

2. Personal lodging and meal expenses. HCI will make these arrangements.
3. Transportation costs in-country.

The following are the personal responsibility of each team member:

1. Expenses pertaining to all personal phone calls, wants or needs.
2. The obtaining and paying of insurance on personal equipment, and personal medical, travel, accident, life, and liability insurance. (Many insurance plans do not cover when traveling outside the USA. Travelers insurance through the airlines will be purchased for you unless you purchase your own ticket. We will ask for your travelers insurance information if you purchase this on your own.)
3. The safety of personal belongings. Do not bring valuables you are not willing to lose.
4. Immunization expenses taken at your discretion. We suggest you consult your own physician and/or your local health department.
5. Passport and visa expense. (Visas are obtained on entry to Nicaragua for \$5.00 paid on arrival)
6. Help collect medical supplies and equipment as needed and instructed.

7. Participate in any orientation or packing team meeting. The packing meeting is essential to the success of the mission trip. If you live in Michigan, please ensure that you have blocked out time for attending. It is typically held on a Friday evening about two weeks prior to departure

Hope Clinic International will arrange and be responsible for the following:

1. All transportation in Nicaragua.
2. The coordinating of the entire medical trip and the liaison between HCI and our host the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.
3. Medical supplies and equipment for your mission.
4. Permissions to practice from the Ministry of Health and all customs permits.

If you are interested in volunteering for a Mission please complete the Attached Application Form and Fax it to me at: 734-929-6621 or mail it to the above PO Box.

Thanks again for your interest in volunteering; I look forward to hearing from you. Please give me a call if you have any question at 734-929-6620

Sheryl Snyder

President

Hope Clinic International